

Man allergic to antitoxin dies

TITUSVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Doctors were faced with a tragic choice when Jack Brown was bitten by a snake: The venom was killing him, but he was also dangerously allergic to snake bite antitoxin.

Brown, 58, died three minutes after doctors injected him with antivenin Thursday in an unsuccessful, last-ditch effort to combat the effects of a snake bite he received three hours earlier.

"It was a difficult situation," Dr. Luis Quintero said Friday. "It was very, very sad.

"Because the patient was developing systemic symptoms so quickly after the bite, I felt the patient was going to need antivenin in spite of the fact he had a known allergy to it,"

Quintero said in a statement released by Jess Parrish Hospital.

Brown was bitten by the snake, possibly a rattlesnake, as he mowed a lawn. He told emergency workers he had been bitten by snakes three times before and had experienced an allergic reaction to snakebite antidote, said Brevard County sheriff's spokeswoman Joan Heller.

After Brown was admitted to the hospital, his condition rapidly deteriorated, she said.

"The doctor talked to the patient and his wife and said the antivenin would be risky," Heller said. Everyone agreed to the treatment, she added.

Minutes later, Brown was dead. ■